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CONFIDENTIAL BEIJING 035946

DEPARTMENT FOR P - DRUSSEL, EAP, EAP/CM

E. O. 12356: DECL: 8/10/2000 TAGS: OVIP (TARNOFF, PETER), PREL, OTRA, CH SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY TARNOFF'S TRAVEL TO CHINA: CHINA PROPOSES AUGUST 26-27 FOR TALKS

REP: (A) BEIJING 35460. (B) STATE 186768

- CONFIDENTIAL ENTIRE TEXT.
- MFA INFORMED EMBASSY ON AUGUST 10 THAT VICE FOREIGN MINISTER LI ZHAOXING WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE ON AUGUST

THE DATES PROPOSED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR UNDER SECRETARY'S DISCUSSIONS IN BEIJING. MFA PROPOSED THAT THE DISCUSSIONS INSTEAD BE HELD ON AUGUST 25~27.

- MFA ALSO OFFERED COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCING THE TRIP (REF B). THEY REQUES THAT WE CHANGE "REVIEW A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT BILATERAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL ISSUES," TO "REVIEW A NUMBER OF BILATERAL ISSUES, INCLUDING TAIWAN." MFA SAID THAT, AFTER THIS CHANGE, PRESS STATEMENT LANGUAGE BETTER THEY REQUEST REFLECTED THE AGREEMENT REACHED BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND VICE PREMIER/FOREIGN MINISTER QIAN QICHEN IN BRUNEI TO FOCUS ON THE CONSEQUENCES OF LEE TENG-HUI'S TRIP TO THE UNITED STATES.
- 4. PLEASE ADVISE RE: (A) OUR RESPONSE TO CHINA'S COUNTERPROPOSAL ON DATES, AND (B) ANY RESPONSE TO CHINA'S PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE PRESS STATEMENT.
- 5. COMMENT: THE REQUESTED CHANGE TO PRESS STATEMENT LANGUAGE REFLECTS BEIJING'S INTENTION TO KEEP THE TALKS FOCUSED ON TAIWAN. ON DATES, WE ARE CERTAIN THAT THE CHINESE COUNTERPROPOSAL FOR THE TIMING OF U/S TARNOFF'S VISIT REFLECTS GENUINE SCHEDULING DIFFICULTIES IN VICE MINISTER LI'S SCHEDULE: MFA OFFICIALS ARE NOT WONT TO SCHEDULE WORK OVER A WEEKEND IF THEY CAN HELP IT. HALLFORD

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